BJA FY 21 John R. Justice (JRJ) Program

Formula Grant Solicitation

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Grants.gov Deadline:
March 16, 2021 11:59 PM

Application JustGrants Deadline:
March 30, 2021 11:59 PM

Overview

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) is seeking applications for funding under the John R. Justice (JRJ) Grant Program which provides student loan repayment assistance for local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors who commit to extended service in those roles. This program furthers the Department’s mission by assisting in the recruitment and retention of qualified attorneys to enhance the criminal justice system.

This solicitation incorporates the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants on how to prepare and submit applications for funding to OJP. **If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.**

This solicitation expressly modifies the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide by not incorporating the “Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver” provisions in the “Financial Information” section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Eligible Applicants:
State governments, Other

Other
For purposes of this solicitation, “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Applicants are limited to state and U.S. territory government agencies designated by their Governor (or the Mayor of the District of Columbia) to administer the JRJ Grant Program. The states, territories, and the District of Columbia will make loan payments directly to the institutions holding loans on behalf of eligible beneficiaries.

Eligible allocations under JRJ are posted annually on the JRJ webpage.

For the purposes of the JRJ Program, the beneficiaries that are eligible can be found on the JRJ webpage.

To advance Executive Order 13929 Safe Policing for Safe Communities, the Attorney General determined that all state, local, and university or college law enforcement agencies must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be eligible for FY 2021 DOJ discretionary grant funding. To become certified, the law enforcement agency must meet two mandatory conditions: (1) the agency’s use of force policies adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws; and (2) the agency’s use of force policies prohibit chokeholds except in situations where use of deadly force is allowed by law. The certification requirement also applies to law enforcement agencies receiving DOJ discretionary grant funding through a subaward. For detailed information on this new certification requirement, please visit https://cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO to access the Standards for Certification on Safe Policing for Safe Communities, Implementation Fact Sheet, and List of Designated Independent Credentialing Bodies.

All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

Contact Information
Agency Contact Description

Name
National Criminal Justice Reference Service Response Center

Title
Response Center

Phone
800-851-3420

Email
Information
For technical assistance with submitting the SF424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at Grants.gov customer support webpage, or email at support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For technical assistance with submitting the full application in DOJ’s Justice Grants System (JustGrants), contact the JustGrants Service Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833–872–5175. The JustGrants Service Desk operates 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern time, Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov or JustGrants technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Response Center (Response Center) at grants@ncjrs.gov within 24 hours after the application deadline to request approval to submit its application after the deadline.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the Response Center by telephone at 800–851–3420 or TTY: 301–240–6310 (hearing impaired only) or by email at grants@ncjrs.gov. Response Center hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Submission Information
In FY 2021, applications will be submitted to DOJ in a NEW two-step process.

**Step 1:** Applicants will submit an SF-424 and an SF-LLL in Grants.gov at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. To register in Grants.gov, applicants will need to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal.

**Step 2:** Applicants will submit the full application, including attachments, in JustGrants at https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/.

To be considered timely, an application must be submitted by the application deadline using Grants.gov, and the applicant must have received a validation message from Grants.gov that indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

OJP encourages applicants to review the “How to Apply” section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.
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Program Description

Overview
The John R. Justice (JRJ) Grant Program (also referred to as the John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program or JRJSLRP) provides student loan repayment assistance for local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors who commit to extended service in those roles.

Statutory Authority
34 U.S.C. § 10671

Any awards under this solicitation will be made under the statutory authority provided by a full-year Department of Justice appropriations act for FY 2021

Specific Information
The purpose of the JRJ Grant Program is to encourage qualified individuals to enter and continue employment as prosecutors and public defenders.

For each state and territory that is eligible to apply for funding under the JRJ Grant Program, BJA will make awards to agencies designated by the Governor of those states or territories (or in the case of the District of Columbia, by the Mayor) to administer the JRJ Grant Program within the state or territory. These designated agencies shall establish and maintain a statewide JRJ Grant Program consistent with the guidance contained in this document and the Act. Additional guidance is available at https://bja.ojp.gov/program/john-r-justice-jrj-program/overview?Program_ID=65.

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Goals
For all states and territories to be able to recruit and retain talented (and eligible) local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors by setting up and maintaining a student loan repayment assistance program for attorneys with the most student loan financial burden who agree to commit to extended employment in public interest law.

Objectives
The objective of the JRJ Grant Program is to offer an incentive to attract and retain qualified local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors who commit to extended employment in those roles, and continue in that capacity for a minimum of 36 months.

Deliverables
Signed JRJ Beneficiary Service Agreements for the current fiscal year (see the JRJ Service Agreement forms on the JRJ web page).

- **Performance Reports:** Recipients are required to submit semi-annual performance reports and verification forms.

- **Expenditure Reports:** Recipients are required to submit quarterly financial reports and “Exited/Repayment” verification forms.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed under “Application and Submission Information.”

**Evidence-Based Programs or Practices**
OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policymaking and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. For additional information and resources on evidence-based programs or practices, see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

**Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities**
OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information, see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide section entitled “Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities.”

**Federal Award Information**
**Awards, Amounts and Durations**
**Anticipated Number of Awards**
56

**Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount of Awards**
$115,000.00

**Period of Performance Start Date**
10/1/21 12:00 AM

**Period of Performance Duration (Months)**

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Anticipated Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation
$2,000,000.00

Clarifications

Availability of Funds
The Bureau of Justice Statistics has calculated a minimum base allocation for each state, territory, and the District of Columbia. This minimum base allocation will then be supplemented by an amount proportional to that state’s or territory’s share of the national population. BJA reserves the right to reallocate unrequested funding in any fiscal year for use by participating states and to reduce future awards by amounts unexpended from the prior year, all based upon such reasonable formulas as is necessary to extend accessibility to program funding.

Agencies designated by the governor of a state or territory, as well as the Mayor of the District of Columbia, to administer the JRJ funding are eligible for the state allocation determined by the allocation process described above.

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Funding Instrument Type
Grant

Award Type
Initial

Is Match Required
No

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls
Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. The “Part 200 Uniform Requirements” means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R. Part 2800, which adopts (with

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement
This solicitation does not require a match.

Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)
See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs).

Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs
See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)
See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Eligibility Information
For eligibility information, see the solicitation cover page.

For information on cost sharing or matching requirements, see Federal Award Information.

Content of Application Submission
See the Application Elements and Formatting Instructions section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on what happens to an application that does not contain all the specified elements or that is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation.

Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
The SF-424 will be submitted in Grants.gov. The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information on completing the SF-424.

**Intergovernmental Review:** This solicitation (“funding opportunity”) is not subject to Executive Order 12372. (In completing the SF-424, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

**Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)**

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. Applicants will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, applicants will need to: add zip codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and verify the organization’s legal name and address.

**Proposal Abstract**

A proposal abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project including primary activities, products and deliverables, the service area, and who will benefit from the proposed project, will be completed in the JustGrants Web-based form.

**Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point Times New Roman font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 15 pages. Pages should be numbered and submitted as an attachment. If the proposal narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJA may negatively consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections must be included as part of the proposal narrative:

a. **Project Design and Implementation**

   - Describe the evaluation process and criteria used to determine applicant eligibility.
   - Propose a process and method for awarding additional JRJ benefits to individuals who have already completed the initial 3-year term of service of their original JRJSLRP Service Agreement and would like to apply for additional benefits in exchange for additional terms of service.

b. **Capabilities and Competencies**
Applications must address a statutory compliance plan describing how the JRJ agency will comply with the statutory requirement that priority consideration be given to those with “the least ability to repay” their loans. Applicants may use their own discretion in identifying a methodology that best identifies a person’s ability to repay their loans.

The statutory compliance plan must also address:

- How it will ensure fair allocation of repayment benefits among prosecutors and public defenders, and among employing entities.
- How much of the current award will be used to meet the statutory requirement found in 34 U.S.C. §10671(f)(2), which provides that priority be given to those individuals who: (a) have received repayment benefits in the prior fiscal year (FY 2020) and (b) who have completed fewer than 3 years of their initial JRJSLRP Service Agreement.

c. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures

- Propose methods for collecting the data for the performance measure evaluation.
- Provide a plan for verifying, on an annual basis, continued employment eligibility and satisfaction of the required service terms as well as tracking and reporting the status of all beneficiaries and reporting said information to BJA.

Note: applicants are not required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under “Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables.”

Applicants can also visit OJP’s performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Award recipients will be required to submit performance measure data in the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) and/or JustGrants. Examples of the performance measures questionnaire can be found here. Further guidance on the post-award submission process will be provided, if selected for award.

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Applicants will submit the program’s goals, objectives, deliverables and timelines in the JustGrants web-based form. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.
Budget and Associated Documentation
Are you going to require the applicant to submit the web-based budget detailed form?
Yes

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form)
Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based budget form. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
Applicants will submit their indirect cost rate agreement by uploading the agreement as an attachment in JustGrants. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

Financial Management Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)
Applicants will download the questionnaire in JustGrants and submit by uploading the completed questionnaire as an attachment in JustGrants. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

Additional Application Components
The applicant will attach the requested documentation in JustGrants.

Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement
If an application proposes research (including research and development) and/or evaluation, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence and integrity, including appropriate safeguards, before it may receive award funds. Applicants will submit a description of their research and evaluation independence and integrity by uploading the document as an attachment in JustGrants. For additional information regarding demonstrating research/evaluation independence and integrity, including appropriate safeguards, see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Designated Agency Representative Letter
Applicants must upload as an attachment in JustGrants a copy of the most recent letter from the governor of the state, territory, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia (or person expressly designated by the governor or mayor) designating an agency to administer JRJ funds. While the most recent copy must be provided, a new Designated Agency Representative Letter is only required if there is a change in the designated agency.

Disclosures and Assurances
Applications will complete the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
Applicants will complete and submit the SF-LLL in Grants.gov. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items
Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
See DOJ Certified Standard Assurance on the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
Applicants will review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements. See OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)

If applicable, applicants will submit as an attachment in JustGrants See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information. A DOJ High Risk Grantee is a recipient
that has received a DOJ High Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, or noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible.

How to Apply

Applicants will submit the full application including attachments in JustGrants at https://justgrants.usdoj.gov/.

For additional information, see the “How to Apply” section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Submission Dates and Time
The SF-424 and the SF-LLL will be submitted in Grants.gov by March 16 at 11:59 pm. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

The full application will be submitted in JustGrants by March 30, 2021 at 11:59 pm. To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

Application Review Information
Review Process
OJP reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with the solicitation. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on the application review process for this solicitation.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed $250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).
Important note on FAPIIS: An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider any such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, the Assistant Attorney General will make all final award decisions.

Federal Award Administration Information
Federal Award Notices
See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on award notifications and instructions.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements
If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance).

For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses
An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on information technology security.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements
In addition to the deliverables described in Program Description, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports. Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measures data.

Progress Reporting Frequency
Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)
For OJP contact(s), see solicitation cover sheet.
For contact information for Grants.gov, see solicitation cover sheet.


Provide Feedback to OJP
See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on how to Provide Feedback to OJP.

Application Checklist
John R. Justice (JRJ) Program
This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

What an Applicant Must Do:
Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire a DUNS Number
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov
- Select the correct Competition ID
- Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package
Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:
Review the “Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2021 Awards” in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

Scope Requirement:
- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) based on the formula allocation.

Eligibility Requirement:
- State governments
- Other

Applicants are limited to state and U.S. territory government agencies designated by their Governor (or the Mayor of the District of Columbia) to administer the JRJ Grant Program. The states, territories, and the District of Columbia will make loan payments directly to the institutions holding loans on behalf of eligible beneficiaries.

Submit SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov

After SF-424 and SF-LLL submission in Grants.gov, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:
- Submission has been received in Grants.gov
- Submission has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

If No Grants.gov Receipt and Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:
- Contact Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at Grants.gov customer support webpage, or email at support@grants.gov regarding technical difficulties (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

Receive email notification to complete application in JustGrants:
- Complete Application in JustGrants

Content of Application Submission
Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov

- Standard Applicant Information (SF-424 info from Grants.gov)
- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget and Associated Documentation
- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)  
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire
- Additional Application Components
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity
- Designated Agency Representative Letter

- Disclosures and Assurances
  - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) 
  - Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications 
  - DOJ Certified Standard Assurance
  - DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
  - Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)

Submit Application in JustGrants:

- Application has been successfully submitted in JustGrants

If JustGrants Application Submission, Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:

- Contact JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833–872–5175 regarding technical difficulties

JRJ Service Agreements

The following JRJ Service Agreement forms are located on the JRJ web page.

- JRJ Beneficiary Service Agreement (first time participant)
Note to JRJ State Administering Agencies: this form should be used only in cases wherein a JRJ program applicant has been selected to participate for the first time.

- **JRR Beneficiary Service Agreement (secondary term of service)**

  Note to JRJ State Administering Agencies: this should be used only in cases wherein a previously selected JRJ beneficiary has fulfilled his/her initial 3-year service obligation, has been selected again by the JRJ State Administering Agency to receive additional JRJ benefits, and has agreed to commit to an additional year of service obligation in exchange for those additional benefits.

- **JRR Beneficiary Service Agreement (Acknowledgment of Benefit)**

  Note to JRJ State Administering Agencies: this form should be used only in cases where a current JRJ beneficiary has not yet fulfilled his/her initial 3-year service obligation, but remains eligible for JRJ benefits. Upon fulfilling his/her initial 3-year service obligation, the JRJ beneficiary may exit the program or, if selected to receive additional JRJ benefits, should execute the JRJSLRP – Secondary Term of Service document.